

**ABSTRACT**

A simulator for request/response systems may be mechanized without the use of manual programming or coding. An interactive rule creation window, supported by a GUI, allows the user to create a rule for fashioning a reply to a message. The rule specifies which messages it applies to and describes the appropriate response. The rule is created in the form of metadata through the rule creation window. In one embodiment, the metadata is compiled and made accessible to a response engine. If desired, additional rules may be created in similar fashion. Any rule can be edited to alter the rule it represents. The response engine has access to the rule or rules and reacts to receipt of a message to interact with the compiled rules to either produce an appropriate response or no response as called for in the rules.